

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Amendment of Part 97 of the Commission's)	
Amateur Radio Service Rules to Eliminate)	RM – 10786, RM-10787
Morse Code Proficiency Testing Requirements)	
For All Classes of Amateur Licenses)	
)	
To: The Commission)	

Comments Of William H. Sohl, ARS #K2UNK

- I have been a licensed amateur radio operator for over 40 years. As a result of being in amateur radio as a teenager, I went on to a lifetime career in telecommunications. I submit the comments herein for your consideration under RM-10787 by the NCVEC organization and RM-10786 by the No Code International organization.
- First...I am also aware of other proposals (RMs) asking for review and often major changes to amateur licensing, requirements and privileges. I ask the FCC to please address that wide array of other proposals (e.g. such as, but not limited to, band segmentation, number of license classes, changes in operator privileges by license class, etc.) as a totally separate proceeding to allow for the focused discussion of and prompt elimination of Morse test requirements from its rules.
- In the history of morse code requirements for Part 97, a comprehensive 1998/99 FCC review of Part 97 amateur rules (Docket 98-143) did not identify any reason other than ITU treaty for the United States to keep *any* Morse testing. Consequently, the FCC in 2000 changed Part 97 morse requirements to that minimally needed (i.e. a single, 5wpm element 1), to stay compliant with ITU regulations.
- Internationally, it was also recognized that there was no longer any rational reason to mandate all hams for HF licenses to demonstrate morse proficiency at any speed. It was, therefore, for exactly that reason (or more precisely lack of reasons) the ITU World Radio Conference, eliminated the mandated international code requirement, effective 7/5/03, for any amateur licensing.
- Already in the international arena, other countries have moved in an expeditious manner (e.g. Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany) and have already eliminated Morse test requirements.

- Since the United States is also, as of July 5, 2003, no longer bound by the previously unwaivable ITU Regulation it too can, and should, act quickly to remove the Part 97 morse requirement.
- It is, therefore, my hope that the Commission will quickly enact the following changes to its rules as addressed by both the NCI (RM-10786) and the NCVEC (RM-10787) petitions:
 1. Delete completely the “Element 1” Morse test from Part 97 rules for all license classes.
 2. As a consequence of (1), modify the privileges for Technician class licensees such that they are the same as current Technician Plus and “Technician with Morse credit” licensees.
- Making the above Morse test only changes immediately results in several specific benefits:
 1. It would quickly make the change of the new ITU treaty available to all new USA ham radio license applicants which is clearly in the public interest,
 2. Where today there are three types of Technician (i.e. Technician, Technician with code credit and Technician Plus), it would simplify the FCC database to and enforcement issues by combining all Technician licenses into one clear, common and unambiguous group
 3. It would remove morse testing as a subject item from all future Part 97 rules changes discussion which may be recommended by others to address whatever non-code test changes are being or may be proposed and
 4. It would allow for appropriate extended and comprehensive review of other, non-code test, Part 97 rules changes as may be made by individuals and/or organizations.

Respectfully submitted,

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